

**It's been a year like no other, for your child as well as for you.**



**With more time spent on the internet, are you sure they're keeping safe online?**



[www.getsafeonline.org](http://www.getsafeonline.org)

# Top tips for a switched-on parent

To many of us, the last year has seemed the longest of our lives ... a time of enforced adaptation to new lifestyles and working practices combined with reduced or no contact with loved ones and concerns about health and wellbeing.

If these circumstances have affected us, as adults, so deeply, the effect on most of our children has, understandably, been more profound. A year represents a large proportion of their young lives. Like us, the impacts of the respective lockdowns have been social, emotional and in many cases, physical. But unlike most adults, it has also heavily affected their learning and development.

In terms of being online, your child's internet usage has almost certainly increased during the pandemic, whether it's doing what they like, or what they need to do. *For many parents, balancing their child's online safety with everything else that's going on can be very challenging.*

To help, our online safety experts have put together some expert tips. And please look out for further campaigns this summer focusing on your child's online safety.

#kidsonline2021



- **Talk regularly with your child** about the good and not-so-good aspects of the internet. Get them to show you what they're doing and try it out for yourself. Get to understand new online technologies and trends. Discuss potential issues like stranger danger, accessing inappropriate content, bullying, oversharing personal information and spending too much time on their devices.
- **Discuss and agree boundaries and rules** from a young age, including time limits and appropriate online usage. Empower your child, but remember that they don't have the maturity or experience to always make the right decisions.
- Apply **parental control software and apps** on computers, mobile devices and games consoles, privacy features on social networking sites, safety options on search engines and safe location settings on devices and apps. Turn on **ISP family filters**.
- Explain and encourage **safe searching, websites and apps**. Check what your child is watching on **streaming sites** like YouTube and TikTok, as well as what they're sharing.
- Social networking, picture/video sharing, gaming and other sites and apps have **lower age limits** for a reason. Download apps only from recognised sources like App Store and Google Play. Add your own email address when setting up accounts and apps for your child.
- **Keep yourself up to date** with new game and social media trends, especially those with negative publicity because they may be violent, encourage gambling or leave the way open for messaging anybody, and hence potential grooming.
- **Ensure your child's video call safety** by updating to the platform's latest version, following its safety advice and making sure call invitations and responses can't be seen by anybody outside their group of friends, or their teacher/school.
- **If your child is into online gaming**, make them aware of things like chatting to strangers, in-game purchases (including using your credit card) and spending too much time online.
- **Fake news and misinformation** are rife on the internet. Advise your child that they shouldn't believe everything they read or see, and to avoid spreading random or sensational content.
- Warn about **oversharing confidential information or personal details** in posts, profiles, messages and chats. Consider what you share yourself.
- If your household is using technology for home schooling, try to **familiarise yourself with how it works** and make sure your child is following the platform's safety advice.
- Unfortunately, criminals have exploited increased online use for recruiting children into **illegal activities** such as cybercrime and drug muling. Keep tabs on your child's online activities and get to know the signs of something not being right.



# Get Safe Online

Get Safe Online is the UK's leading source of information and advice on online safety and security, for the public and small businesses. It is a not-for-profit, public/private sector partnership backed by law enforcement agencies and leading organisations in internet security, banking and retail.

For more information and expert, easy-to-follow, impartial advice on safeguarding yourself, your family, finances, devices and workplace, visit [www.getsafeonline.org](http://www.getsafeonline.org)

If you think you've been a victim of online fraud, report it to Action Fraud, the UK's national fraud and cybercrime reporting centre on **0300 123 20 40** or at [www.actionfraud.police.uk](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk)

In Scotland, report fraud to Police Scotland by calling **101**.



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